



**REPRESENTATIVE
TOM MIELKE**

**SERVING CITIZENS IN
CLARK, COWLITZ AND
LEWIS COUNTIES**

18TH DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER AND SURVEY

Dear Friends,

These past few months have been difficult for each of us. The horrific events we faced on September 11 and the recent strikes by the U.S. military have left a hole in our hearts. Putting any of our sons and daughters into the danger zone requires tough decisions by leaders, but I see it as important to maintain a free and safe world now and into the future. As a former member of the military, I am honored and pleased to see the citizens of the United States join together to support our police, fire and military forces.

Here in the state of Washington, we have felt the repercussions from the September attack and military response. Businesses, especially those in areas that depend on travel and tourism, have taken a serious blow. The range of citizens affected by the attacks is vast – from Boeing's commercial airliner division to the retired couple operating a café near Mount Rainier.

We will be here to make sure this state not only makes it through the tough times at hand, but plans for the future. The time is here for responsible government and we can do this together. I hope the following information is both helpful and reassuring. Please feel free to call me at the numbers listed below with any questions and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Tom Mielke

State Representative
18th District

OLYMPIA OFFICE:

PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
360-786-7850 or 1-800-562-6000

DISTRICT OFFICE:

1131 SE Grace Street
Battle Ground, WA
(360) 576-6054

E-MAIL:

mielke_th@leg.wa.gov

**LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION
ON THE INTERNET:**

www.leg.wa.gov

**STATE GOVERNMENT
ON THE INTERNET:**

www.access.wa.gov

TRANSPORTATION

Media reports about transportation “failure” have unfairly characterized both my and my Republican colleagues’ work in Olympia. This year we passed a transportation budget that includes \$3.5 billion in funding. I was proud to vote for this budget that didn’t raise taxes.

In recent months, we have been bombarded with dire warnings that our state’s largest businesses will leave without a transportation-funding package. While I agree we need to fight congestion, the traffic problems in this state aren’t the only reason business leaders are hinting at expansion outside Washington.

We must wake up to the fact that our state’s oppressive business tax structure creates an unfriendly business climate. This year, legislation that would bring consistency to taxation of Washington businesses unfortunately didn’t receive the attention it deserved. It was aimed at providing basic fairness and would lay the groundwork for easing the burdensome paper-work faced by manufacturers and retailers.

This is my fourth year working to help our more liberal colleagues understand what Republicans have known for some time – Washington isn’t a business-friendly state. When you add an unfair tax structure to skyrocketing electricity and health care costs, plus a drought, it’s a recipe for disaster.

On July 21, legislators were presented with a proposal that included a 40 percent tax increase (a gas tax increase of as much as 9 cents per gallon, an increase in the sales tax on car purchases, and increased weight fees for trucks and recreational vehicles). Plus, a regional plan was introduced that would have established local transportation taxing districts. Many of you contacted me with concerns regarding this regional plan – worried you will be taxed for projects outside our area. For these reasons, I opposed the plan.

Since January, we have pushed for transportation efficiency measures. Competitive bidding **and** streamlining the environmental permitting process must be approved to make transportation construction faster and less expensive. The streamlining measure has been signed into law, and it will go a long way to maximize the value of every taxpayer dollar spent to reduce the congestion that threatens our state’s families and economy. However, this is the **only efficiency measure** the governor and our Democrat counterparts have accepted so far.

There is no debating that Washington needs continued funding for congestion relief. I take very seriously my responsibility to find ways to stretch the taxes you pay to maximize our investments.

I also opposed the transportation-funding package due to a 33 percent allocation to non-road projects. When the governor explained his “road” plan, he wasn’t telling you about this 33 percent requirement – a requirement he and his Democrat colleagues insisted upon. They were unwilling to concentrate on truly relieving congestion on our roads.

My goal from the beginning of this year was to develop a fair transportation plan that funded new roads. Our traffic congestion was created by a so-called “growth management” act that created an artificial scarcity of land. Democrats also sugarcoated this issue 10 years ago. The truth was and is that it actually reduced the transportation options available.



REPRESENTATIVE
TOM MIELKE

18TH DISTRICT
SERVING CITIZENS IN CLARK, COWLITZ
AND LEWIS COUNTIES

BUDGETING FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW



When terrorists attacked New York and Washington, D.C., our hearts and prayers went out to those touched by the tragedy. The implications of this catastrophe then spread, and our economy suffered a blow. Although it may be difficult, we have many reasons to stay positive in this time of uncertainty. This area has faced similar economic downturns in the past 30 years and we will build on those experiences.

The first lesson we must remember is that this state has a responsibility to care for its most needy citizens. And, second, this isn't the time to raise taxes. In June, the Democrat-controlled Senate presented a budget that remembered one of these rules but forgot the second.

We knew the deepening weakness in the state's economy was a rapidly escalating risk to the state's financial condition. Many, inside and outside state government, raised all sorts of red flags about this budget because it so amazingly ignored the state's budget-balancing challenges and own economic forecasts. I refused to vote for it.

Then, we were presented with the state's September revenue forecast and anticipate a November economic forecast to show an additional \$200 to \$500 million drop in state revenues. That would create a \$1 billion shortfall to address with the Legislature at the beginning of the 2003 session with only \$460 million remaining in the state's emergency reserve fund. At this rate of spending, the state general fund stands to be almost \$3 billion short for the entire 2003-05 budget cycle.

Some in Olympia are setting the people of Washington up for drastic cuts in public services, a very large tax increase, or both. They wouldn't make the tough choices to streamline government and force government to spend within its means.

18TH DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE SURVEY

I'd like to hear from you. What are your ideas and opinions on the upcoming legislative session? Please take a moment to fill out this brief survey. You can e-mail your responses to mielke_th@leg.wa.gov or complete the survey, fold, and mail back to the following address:

Rep. Tom Mielke, PO Box 40600 Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

1. What do you believe is the most critical issue facing our state? Please rank in order of importance from a high of 1 to a low of 7.

- _____ Public schools
- _____ Property taxes
- _____ Government over-regulation
- _____ State transportation system
- _____ Energy and utility issues
- _____ State budget
- _____ Washington business climate

2. Do you believe certain state programs are "off limits" to budget cuts?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, which ones: _____



Please
place
stamp
here



Representative Tom Mielke
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

18TH DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE SURVEY CONT'D.

3. Do you support Gov. Locke's transportation funding proposal and tax increases, including a 9 cent-per-gallon gas tax increase, a new 2% auto and truck sales tax, an increase in the weight-mile tax on trucks and recreational vehicles, and a 12 cent-per-gallon increase in the diesel fuel tax?

_____ Yes _____ No

Comments: _____

4. Who should decide whether we have any new user fees or taxes for transportation in our state?

_____ The people through legislative referendum

_____ The Legislature

Comments: _____



PERMITTED
OLYMPIA WA
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
STANDARD
PERMIT NO 92

18TH DISTRICT
NEWSLETTER
AND SURVEY

REPRESENTATIVE
TOM MIELKE
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600